

The Baptist Record

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Father's Day, June 12 —

A tribute to Christian fathers

By Dianne Ray

When my great grandfather was asked what he thought of something, he always asked, "Compared to what?"

As Father's Day approaches we should ask ourselves what we think of our parenting skills. Then follows the question, "Compared to what?"

By creating Adam first, God clearly told us man was to be the head of the family. Society today seems to have forgotten that.

Fortunately for me, I was born

when most fathers and mothers lived together as a family. Single parenting and latchkey children had not become the norm.

Compared to what the Bible tells us we should do as parents, most of us fall far short. If you don't agree, pick up any newspaper or listen to any news broadcast. You will find an alarming number of children involved in tragic incidents of crime and violence.

I believe most of the problems we have to deal with today stem

from the fact that fathers do not take their role seriously. An earthly father has as his example the Heavenly Father and if more of them followed his example of love and forgiveness our world would begin to look more like the one God gave us.

Since we are about to celebrate that special time known as Father's Day, I want to impress upon everyone the utmost importance of a Christian father.

For 40 years now my father has been a minister. He has pastored several churches in rural Attala County and one in Sharkey County and in addition to those duties has had a full-time job most of those years, been a husband, and the father of three daughters.

For as long as I can remember my father was in a pulpit on Sundays and Wednesdays. Many Fridays and Saturdays were spent conducting weddings in our living room. With all of these things going on and the many funerals he was called to conduct and people he counseled, it is a wonder he had time for a family.

Even though my father worked long, hard hours, we always had breakfast and supper together. God's blessing was asked before each meal and was led by my father.

Busy as he was, he provided the most important things a father can give his children — Christian guidance, love, and forgiveness. He provided us with the knowledge of our heavenly Father.

He loved us enough to take us to church — not send us. He loved us enough that even before we were born he chose a Christian wife to be his helpmeet. He loved us

enough that he gave us never-ending support and forgiveness.

All of these characteristics are those set forth in the Bible as guidelines for parents — not just fathers, for the home should be constituted of both fathers and mothers.

Not only have I experienced my father's love and forgiveness, I have seen it extended to those outside our immediate family. I have seen my father's sadness when another family lost a loved one and I have seen his joy when a soul was saved.

A father's image

4 years: "My daddy can do anything!"

7 years: "My dad knows a lot — a whole lot."

8 years: "My father doesn't know quite everything."

12 years: "Oh, well, naturally, Father doesn't know that either."

14 years: "Oh, Father? He is hopelessly old-fashioned."

21 years: "Oh, that man — he's out of date!"

25 years: "He knows a little bit about it, but not much."

33 years: "I must find out what Dad thinks about it."

35 years: "Before we decide, we will get Dad's idea first."

50 years: "What would Dad have thought about that?"

60 years: "My dad knew literally everything!"

65 years: "I wish I could talk it over with Dad once more."

— Author unknown

Many churches have played a role in our lives and my father has played a role in the lives of many churches. We have felt great love from many people and I believe they have felt love from us.

For the last 24 years my father has been the pastor of Jerusalem Church near Kosciusko. With the passing of his 65th birthday, he has decided to retire, and in a lovely reception held Sunday, May 29, this wonderful church showed its love for him and my mother.

As we near the day we acknowledge the greatness of our fathers, I want to express to my earthly father what joy it has been to have been guided down life's pathway by a Christian man. Having been loved and forgiven through many mistakes makes me realize how very fortunate I am.

Of course, I must give credit to my mother who fulfilled her role as Christian wife and mother to the greatest degree possible. But since we are talking about fathers here, I will only let you know her role was vital.

When fathers compare themselves to what the Bible instructs them to be, I pray they will be able to say, "I have trained my child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

And when I am asked what I think of my father's parenting skills, I'll be able to say, "Compared to my heavenly Father's instructions, I think he did his best. Thank you, Daddy."

Ray lives in Kosciusko, and is the oldest daughter of Sammy Ray, pastor of Jerusalem Church, Attala Association.



Never too late to learn

Eric Still, 12, of Mendenhall, adjusts his mother's mortar board at her recent graduation from William Carey College. Edwina Still graduated cum laude with a major in psychology 23 years after first entering college. "I went to Clarke College where I met Benny. We married, and he completed his degree at Carey in '78. After being a full-time mother and working with Benny in his ministry, I was able to return to Carey in 1992 to complete my degree." Mrs. Still serves as minister of youth and music at Poplar Springs Church in Mendenhall, where her husband is pastor. "Eventually I want to obtain a master's degree in counseling," Mrs. Still said.

Congress honors Moons

A request from a group affiliated with the Unification Church has resulted in a U.S. House of Representatives resolution indirectly honoring church founder Sun Myung Moon, according to the May 1994 edition of *Church and State* magazine. "Parents Day" was passed March 11 on a voice vote, and critics have pointed out the similarities between the wording and the controversial Korean minister's reference to himself and his wife as the "true parents" of mankind. The date set for Parents Day — July 28 — also happens to be the first anniversary of a Capitol Hill reception honoring Mrs. Moon. Congressman Dan Burton (R-Ind.), the resolution's sponsor, simply referred questions to Christian Voice, a group the magazine identified as having ties to Moon. The May 1994 issue of the church's newspaper contains a large photograph of the Moons proudly holding up a giant replica of the resolution at their Second World Peace Conference. "With the authority of the U.S. Congress, it was a crowning moment to the Peace Conference," the newspaper observed.

Schools defy access law

Another school board must pay dearly for their attempt to sidestep federal law in providing equal access for high school students wishing to form religious clubs. The East Brunswick, N.J., school board frustrated attempts to form a Bible club by requiring faculty advisors to be involved in club meetings, according to the U.S. District Court in Newark. Such a requirement is expressly forbidden in the Equal Access Act, and "(one) can think of few more blatant... ways to subvert Congressional intent," the court said. The school board agreed to pay \$97,000 in plaintiffs' attorney fees. "This is the third case in three years where school districts have had to pay large settlements because they refused to obey the law," said Steve McFarland, director of the Christian Legal Society's Center for Law and Religious Freedom, which took on the case for the students. The Buffalo, N.Y., school board was forced to pay \$125,000 in legal costs in 1991, and a petition for over \$500,000 in attorney fees has been filed for a similar case in Washington state.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Pastors of Baptist churches across Mississippi begin meetings to organize the state's participation in the SBC Home Mission Board's nationwide revival effort for 1986, called "Good News America: God Loves You."

20 years ago

Main Street Church, Hattiesburg, commemorates the 30-year tenure of J.E. Barnes Jr., noting church membership has nearly doubled and missions giving has been almost \$1 million since he became pastor at the height of World War II.

50 years ago

Baptists mourn the passing of W.T. Lowery, former president of Blue Mountain College (27 years), Mississippi College (13 years), and the Mississippi Baptist Convention. He also chaired the state's alcohol prohibition committee.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Jerry Falwell and the SBC

Now it is a bit easier to understand how Jerry Falwell, Liberty University chancellor, gets on program at the SBC Pastors' Conferences. Recently the *Liberty Flame* was published, with pictures of all the trustees of the school. Among those trustees were Freddie Gage, SBC evangelist; Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood in Dallas; Richard Lee, pastor of Rehoboth Church in Atlanta; James Merritt, pastor at Snellville, near Atlanta; Ike Reighard, pastor at New Hope in Atlanta (and president of the Pastors' Conference); Bailey Smith of Atlanta, past SBC president; and Jerry Vines, also past SBC president and pastor in Jacksonville, Fla.

Liberty University is owned and operated by Jerry Falwell. He has done a notable job to get such a school off the ground. It is not a Southern Baptist school, nor is Falwell a Southern Baptist. At one time he was solidly in the J. Frank Norris-John R. Rice camp of fundamentalism.

He spoke in Hattiesburg a few years ago in the alleged abuse case of a high school student. Later the fundamentalists threw him out on the "separatism" doctrine. Jerry refused to "come ye

out from among them," — the "them" being other evangelicals in general and Southern Baptists in particular.

He is still considered to be on the "far right" and the national media searches for Falwell or Pat Robertson when needing a right wing quote. Falwell once called for the abolition of public schools and declared the whole system to be "damned." Christians were urged to withdraw their children and put them in private schools or teach them at home. One reason for the pitiful plight of America says Jerry, is the "deafening silence of the evangelical pulpit."

No stone nor purse has been left unturned in seeking funds for Liberty U. According to *Christianity Today* (July 19, 1993), the school is seeking funds from the state of Virginia, and had to sacrifice some of its Christian convictions to do this. Falwell hotly denies this allegation, and declares the university still has strict rules on campus. He believes the school is being singled out by Americans United for Separation of Church & State because of its ultra-conservative stance.

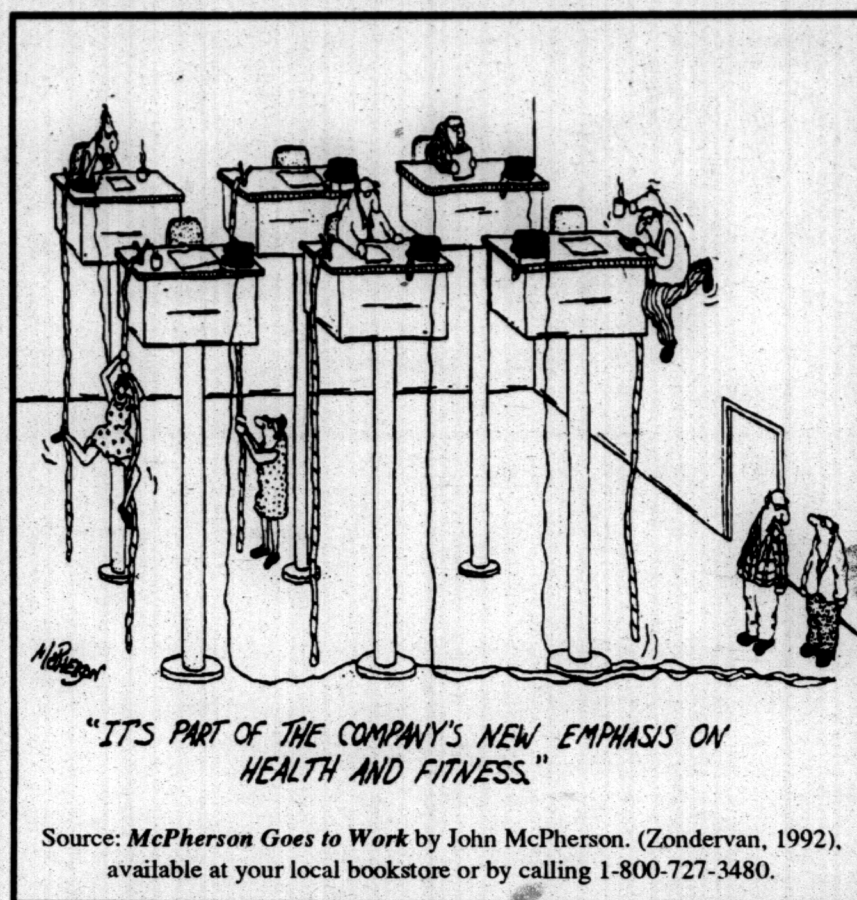
Also, several years ago the IRS revoked the tax-exempt status of the "Old Time Gospel Hour" and

the ministry was hit with a \$50,000 fine. It seems the "Gospel Hour" used assets and personnel for a political action committee which supported various congressional candidates.

Jerry is now on 225 TV stations and has whittled the university's debt down to about \$40 million. He is driven to keep the school alive, to pastor the Thomas Road Church, and to maintain close ties with the SBC. Thus far he has done well at all three... this will be his third time to speak at the SBC Pastors' Conference in recent years. Recently, while speaking in Virginia, Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Seminary, said that many independent churches have come on board and "we keep on hoping that 'Uncle' Jerry (Falwell) will come our way."

The Southern Baptists on his board of trustees are all visible leaders in the SBC. Several are active in promoting Fred Wolfe or Jim Henry for SBC president at Orlando in mid-June. Jerry will preach... and many Baptists there will follow the lead of his trustees.

This voice says the SBC does not need Mr. Falwell nor do we need to be peddlers of his brand of fundamentalism.



Source: *McPherson Goes to Work* by John McPherson. (Zondervan, 1992), available at your local bookstore or by calling 1-800-727-3480.

THE FRAGMENTS

Bold Mission Vision

The difficulty of gathering accurate statistics from all nations is not exaggerated. Not all churches, denominations, or nations see fit to use the Uniform Church Letter.

Even so, we keep trying to measure church growth around the world. Southern Baptists, along with several other denominations, have expressed the desire to win the world to Christ in this final decade of the 20th century. Many Christian leaders believe we could witness the greatest spiritual harvest the world has ever seen.

Bill and Amy Stearns, in *Catch the Vision 2000*, give a report:

† In 1900, Korea had no Protestant church; it was deemed "impossible to penetrate." Today Korea is 30% Christian, with 7,000 churches in Seoul alone.

† More Muslims in Iran have come to Christ since 1980 than in the previous 1,000 years combined. Before Khomeini's revolution in 1979 there were about 2,000 Iranian believers. After years of intensified persecution, there are now more than 15,000.

† 28,000 people become believ-

ers every day in the People's Republic of China. In 1950, when China closed to foreign missionaries, there were 1 million believers. Today, conservative estimates say there are more than 60 million.

† 20,000 become believers every day in Africa; that continent was 3% Christian in 1900 and is more than 40% Christian today.

† In Indonesia, the percentage of Christians is so high the government won't print the statistic — which is probably nearing 25% of the population. The last accurate tally of Indonesian Christians, in 1979, revealed that more than 2 million Muslims had turned to Christ.

† After 70 years of oppression in the Soviet Union, Christians number about 100 million — five times the number of the Communist Party at the height of its popularity, and 36% of the population.

† The government of Papua, New Guinea, recently mandated Bible teaching in every school in the country.

— GH

Guest opinion...

The SBC — Why was it really formed?

By Bob Terry

NASHVILLE (BP) — The year 1844 was supposed to be a banner year for Baptists in the United States. It was the 30th anniversary of the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions or, more commonly called, the Triennial Convention. The year marked the 20th anniversary of the Baptist General Tract Society, and the American Baptist Home Mission Society celebrated its 12th anniversary.

But 1844 was anything but a year of celebration for Baptists. Even though leaders from both the North and South tried to steer the Baptist denomination away from the rocks of destruction, gale-like forces inexorably drove Baptists toward separation.

Slavery was the wind howling most fiercely in denominational sails, but it was not the only force driving the Baptist ship. Dissension over home mission efforts kept the waters turbulent. And all the while, Baptists argued about how to steer the denominational ship to best accomplish the tasks

of missions, education, and other benevolent activities.

All looked promising when Baptists formed their first national body in 1814. Baptists north and south, east and west united in the cause of missions. The catalyst was support for foreign missionaries Adoniram Judson and his wife Ann Hasseltine, missionaries to Burma. Thirty-three delegates, as they were then called, met at First Church of Philadelphia on May 18 and formed the Triennial Convention, so named because it met every three years.

Led by Richard Furman and W.B. Johnson of South Carolina and Francis Wayland of Massachusetts, the group adopted a convention structure which allowed for multiple activities, all responsible to the Triennial Convention. The new national body had authority to do more than foreign missions but that was its only organized task when it adjourned May 24.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society was formed in 1832 and headquartered in New

York City. The constitution provided auxiliary memberships for state home mission societies as well as mission societies of associations and churches. It was an attempt to unite Baptists of the United States in home missions just as the Triennial Convention had done in foreign missions. Within 10 years, the Home Mission Society had missionaries serving throughout the United States. But more work was done in the North than in the South.

Southern Baptists complained they were being ignored; that they were financing work in the North and not getting as much mission effort as they were paying for. One study indicates that was not the case. In 1841, receipts from states generally acknowledged as southern and southwestern states totaled \$29,093. Appropriation for mission work in those same states was \$30,842. States generally considered northern states contributed \$93,217 during that year and received appropriations of \$68,525.

Still Southerners complained of

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Clinton signs clinic-access bill; it's "farce," CLC lawyer says

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP) — A new measure establishing the blockading of abortion clinics as a federal offense "is not a strike against the First Amendment," President Clinton said moments before signing it into law, but pro-life advocates sharply disagreed with his contention.

On May 26, Clinton signed The Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, which targets not only the blocking of clinic entrances but also makes a federal offense of threats against women seeking abortions, vandalism of abortion clinics, and violence against clinic personnel.

Pro-lifers, including many who oppose violence and do not endorse the blockading of clinics,

attacked FACE as a violation of free-speech rights and as unnecessary because of other laws in existence. Many also fear the law will result in the suppression of legal activities such as sidewalk counseling and picketing, a charge which FACE supporters deny.

"FACE is a farce," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Christian Life Commission. "The signing ceremony was a masquerade ball for pro-aborts and the president to put on a false face that this federal law was needed to stop violence at abortion-clinic entrances."

Clinton and abortion advocates know "local laws can handle violent crimes," Whitehead said.

"They want FACE to give cover for broad new federal power to make a federal felony out of what once was free speech. We join other pro-life leadership in deploring and condemning violence, but FACE is really about abortion politics and making federal political prisoners out of peaceful protesters."

Rep. Chris Smith, R.-N.J., charged FACE discriminates on the basis of the content of the protest.

"In the 'brave new world' of FACE, a group of pro-life protesters could block one entrance of an abortion clinic, while a completely different group engaged in a labor dispute could block another entrance of the

clinic, and only the pro-life protesters would be charged as federal felons, simply because their viewpoints are disfavored by the current administration," Smith said in a written statement.

Pro-choice advocates supported FACE as necessary to protect abortion clinic workers and to ensure women have the right to obtain an abortion.

While the country is "strengthened by people whose religious

convictions on this issue may be different from mine or from yours," Americans must obey the law, reduce the animosity, and listen and work together across barriers in the debate over abortion, Clinton told supporters at the signing ceremony.

Strode is director, media & news information, Washington office, CLC.

Hearing scheduled for casino's proposed site near Gulfshore facility

By William H. Perkins Jr

Opposing sides will square off in Biloxi before the Mississippi Gaming Commission on Thursday, June 30, in the battle over a proposed casino within sight of Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Pass Christian.

Chuck Patton, spokesman for the commission, said the state's three gaming commissioners will take up the proposal during their June 30 meeting, which will begin at 9 a.m. at the Treasure Bay Hotel in Biloxi.

Treasure Bay Hotel, part of a casino complex, is the former Royal D'Iberville Hotel, located at 1980 Beach Boulevard (U.S. Highway 90) in Biloxi.

Spectrum, Inc. has proceeded with its bid to build the multi-level, 24-hour gambling facility within 400 yards of the state Baptist campground, despite opposition from the Mississippi Baptist Convention and local landowners who want to maintain the residential nature of the area.

The Harrison County Board of Supervisors, in whose jurisdiction the casino will be located, on Oct. 25, 1993, voted unanimously against endorsing the project.

Paul Jones, executive director of the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, has urged all Mississippi Baptists to write personal letters to the three gaming commissioners to express their opposition to the project.

He has also warned that the casino is not an isolated Gulf Coast issue, since Baptists from all

areas of the state — and nation — utilize Gulfshore's multipurpose facilities.

"I would describe the response from Baptists as a 'flood,'" Jones said.

Many churches are planning to send busloads of their members to the hearing in Biloxi that day, Jones pointed out, and he encouraged other churches to send members, too.

"We shouldn't be intimidated that this hearing is being held at a gambling facility. If we have to go into the 'lion's den' to stop this casino, then that's what we must do," he said.

For more information, contact CAC at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

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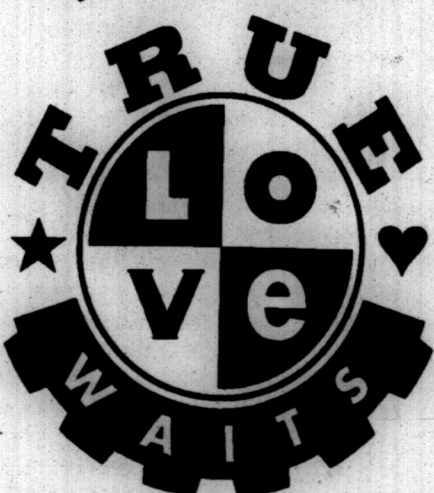
"True Love Waits" commitment cards start journey to Orlando

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Sean Keith is so proud of Mississippi's "True Love Waits" teenagers that he has made special plans for the display of thousands of commitment cards from around the state at the Southern Baptist Convention annual session in Orlando on June 14-16.

"Over 3,000 young people from about 120 churches in Mississippi have turned in the cards, and more are coming in daily. This is the culmination of a year-long effort across the state," said Keith, youth consultant in the Sunday School department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

"True Love Waits" is the national campaign by the Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) to promote sexual abstinence. Young people sign commitment cards



and participate in commitment services with their parents in their local churches.

Commitment cards from across the nation will be staked in special holders outside the conven-

tion center in Orlando during the annual session.

Keith said BSSB officials are confident that well over 100,000 cards will arrive in Orlando.

Keith plans to position himself at the Mississippi section of the "True Love Waits" card display, so he can explain to everyone who passes by how the state's Baptist young people are leading their friends to understand the importance of chastity until marriage as an important component of the Christian lifestyle.

The program has caught fire around the United States, with other denominations and even secular youth groups scrambling to become part of the campaign.

The Baptist World Alliance announced recently that "True Love Waits" has been endorsed to the 38 million people in 165 Baptist groups worldwide that comprise the alliance.

It's almost too late to send commitment cards to the Orlando meeting. Cards should be shipped by June 10, directly to The Anderson Company/True Love Waits, 4352 34th Street, Orlando, FL 32811.

Cards that don't make it to Orlando can be sent to Washington, D.C. for the massive "True Love Waits" rally and display on July 29. Those cards should be mailed to Beltway Movers/True Love Waits, 6308 Gravel Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22310. Over 500,000 cards are expected there.

Keith can be contacted at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.



Youth from First Church, Pearl, wrap up the packing of over 3,000 Orlando-bound "True Love Waits" commitment cards stored at the Baptist Building Annex in Jackson. Steve Wright (back, left) is minister of youth at First Church, Pearl. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

1993 Lottie Moon offering totals nearly \$83 million

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptists gave a record \$82,899,291 to the 1993 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

The final total, tallied after books on the offering closed May 31, represented a 2.37% increase — or \$1.9 million — over the 1992 figure of \$80.9 million. Receipts missed the \$85 million goal but topped the previous record, set in 1991, by more than \$1.5 million.

The increase encouraged Foreign Mission Board leaders in light of the fact the 1992 and 1990 offerings were below the previous years' totals.

"I'm ecstatic," said FMB President Jerry Rankin. Despite disagreements among Southern Baptists, the offering "affirms that we're still focused on missions and that Southern Baptists are confident in what God is doing through our Foreign Mission Board," he said.

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Paul Harvey

Commissioners
Stuart C. Irby (Chairman)
Bill Gresham, Jr.
Robert C. Ingram



New VBS materials

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Joe Salomone coaxes "Luther" the frog back into his box during a humorous moment in a premiere performance of the new VBS musical "Trail of Treasures." Designed to be learned and performed by students attending VBS or used in advance as a promotional tool, the new musical was introduced to more than 100 state convention leaders attending a VBS Institute in Kansas City, Mo. The 4th-6th grade children's choir at Pleasant Valley Church in Kansas City performed the musical. Other performers (left to right) include: Brian Retherford, Sara Bush, Jill Harrison, and Jack Simpson. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

Luncheons for Ministers' Wives, Rapha relocated

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — The Ministers' Wives Luncheon is among 14 events scheduled in tandem with the Southern Baptist Convention being relocated after the Orlando, Fla., Peabody Hotel ballroom ceiling sustained water damage May 31.

The Ministers' Wives Luncheon, slated June 14 as part of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, now will be held in the Clarion Plaza hotel.

Among other events being relocated is Rapha luncheon June 13 to a portion of Hall B in the Orange County Convention/Civic Center.

New sites for the June 13 SBC Executive Committee meeting and the June 15 Southern Seminary breakfast had not been determined June 6.

May CP receipts up 16% over last year

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for May were up 16.36% above the previous year which helped push total CP receipts for the year at more than 3% above 1993, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

Gifts for May 1994 totaled \$12,956,497 compared to May 1993 of \$11,135,016, an increase of \$1,821,481 or 16.36%. For the eight months of fiscal year 1993-94, total gifts reached \$95,713,259, an increase of \$2,803,349 — 3.02% — over 1992-93.

For the SBC program allocation budget, gifts have surpassed the budget for the eight-month period by 3.86%. The monthly budget requirement for the SBC budget is \$11,519,561. The May 1994 gifts surpassed the monthly budget requirement by 12.47%.

Designated gifts for May 1994 totaled \$17,056,876 compared to May 1993 of \$15,498,080, or a 10.06% increase. For the year to date, designated gifts are at \$107,438,230 compared to the previous year of \$105,232,750 or a 2.1% increase.

Promise Keepers rally says it's okay to be a godly man

By Art Toalston

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Finally, applause and cheering that rocks a stadium, not for a touchdown in a championship football game, but for Jesus.

It happened in Indianapolis June 3-4 when 62,000 men filled the Hoosier Dome for a Promise Keepers meeting.

The men, from an array of denominations and nearly every state, frequently roared approval of to-the-point statements by featured speakers and rousing music conveying the message that a real man can, among other things, learn to ask his wife's forgiveness when he's wrong and unapologetically love Jesus.

"Men today in our culture are in such jeopardy," said Joseph Stowell, president of Chicago's Moody Bible Institute, during a noon news conference June 4. Men have been stripped of their identity and of a cause they can give their lives to, he said.

The national Promise Keepers men's movement, Stowell said, is helping men recover the "greatest identity in the world" — being a follower of Christ — an identity involving "a cause that we can give our lives to" in the family, church, and community.

Promise Keepers rallies in Indianapolis and five other cities are scheduled this year, to encompass an estimated 200,000 men. The movement has been building momentum nationally since an initial meeting in 1991 in Boulder, Colo., initiated by University of Colorado head football coach Bill McCartney.

The goal for Promise Keepers gatherings in 1995 is 500,000 men, said Randy Phillips, president of the organization.

Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, called Promise Keepers "one of the most significant movements of our time," involving laymen in the cause of Christ like nothing else he's ever seen. Promise Keepers, he said during the news conference, could be the prelude to a national revival for which he and countless others have long been praying.

"Males are right at the heart of most of the social ills of our country," said Gary Smalley, nationally known marriage and family speaker. A movement is long overdue aimed at changing "the hearts of men and the heart of the

country," he said.

Meanwhile, Jeffrey A. Johnson Sr., pastor of Indianapolis' Eastern Star Church, said Promise Keepers needs to be more than just "men coming together" in various meetings. "It needs to be something that takes place in our heart," he said, citing especially the Christian church's and America's ongoing need for racial reconciliation.

In opening the weekend celebration of Christian manhood, Bob Horner, a Campus Crusade speaker from Boulder, Colo., noted, "As far as we know, this is the greatest number of men who have ever gathered in recorded history for the purpose of honoring Jesus Christ," occasioning the first of many rounds of reverberating applause and cheering.

"Probably many of us who are married were sent here by our wives," Horner quipped a few moments later, prompting another round of applause.

What, exactly, is a "Promise Keeper"?

The movement has stated it in seven promises men are urged to make:

"1) to honor Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to his Word.

"2) to pursue vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that I need brothers to help me keep my promises.

"3) to practice spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.

"4) to build strong marriages and families through love, protection, and biblical values.

"5) to support the mission of my church by honoring and praying for my pastor and by actively giving my time and resources.

"6) to reach beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

"7) to influence my world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20)."

To keep such promises, "the power of God working in your life" is vital, said Bill Hybels, one of the featured speakers and pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill.

Otherwise, "the chances of keeping your promises are nil and none," Hybels said, and within a few weeks of announcing such

lofty intentions, "our spouses and children will say, 'He did it again.'"

Many men, Hybels cautioned, make virtually no effort to find a "moral benchmark" and they vastly overrate how good they are in the eyes of a holy God.

Both individuals have squarely stated they fall far short of God's standards, Hybels noted. So, what about everyone else? he asked. And what will bridge the gap between God's standards and holiness and people's sins — their "cosmic treason" — against God in their daily lives, their marriages, their ethics at work, their thought life?

God sent Jesus, Hybels answered, so that people's sins can be transferred to his shoulders, to his sacrificial, substitutionary death, his voluntarily bearing of their death penalty. To make it real in their lives, Hybels said, people must make "a personal transaction" with God, admitting their foulups and sins to him, abandoning all other outside help, asking for Christ's work on the cross to be applied to their need, calling out for Jesus to become their Lord and Savior.

At that moment, Hybels said, their sins will be forgiven, the Holy Spirit will take up residence in their lives and begin transforming them; and their eternal destiny will be secured.

After Hybels' message, an estimated 3,500 men responded to an invitation to invite Christ into their lives or rededicate their lives to Christ.

John Maxwell, another featured speaker and pastor of Skyline Wesleyan Church in San Diego, Calif., defined success as "having those who are the closest to me love and respect me the most."

Of men who excuse their marital infidelities and other sins with the notion "God loves to forgive," Maxwell said, "Men listen: That kind of thinking... breaks the heart of God. We ought to have a heart that loves righteousness and hates evil."

In overcoming the temptation to sin sexually, Maxwell said men need to "stay as close to the cross of Jesus and stay shoulder-to-shoulder in helping one another to be godly men."

Toalston writes for Baptist Press.

State CP gifts up for May, down for '94

Mississippi Baptists gave \$1,617,721 through the Cooperative Program in May according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which forwards the gifts to missions and education causes in the state and around the world.

This amount is \$54,177 more than that given in May of 1993.

The 1994 total is \$9,135,827, which is \$277,218 more than that given in the first five months of 1993.

However, 1994 giving is \$219,173 under the pro rata amount for January through May of \$9,355,000. The pro rata amount is figured by taking the total budget (\$22,452,000 for 1994), dividing by 12 (months), and multiplying by the number of months elapsed in the year.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' main channel of giving for support of more than 8,000 missionaries at home and abroad and six seminaries, plus numerous other educational and mission works.

CLC, other groups announce boycott of RU-486 companies

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Christian Life Commission has joined with the National Right to Life Committee and four other organizations to promote a boycott of the companies which have made possible the introduction of the French abortion pill RU-486 into the United States.

The boycott will target the products of Roussel Uclaf, the French manufacturer of RU-486; Hoechst AG, the German parent company of Roussel Uclaf; and Hoechst Celanese and Hoechst Roussel, the German corporation's United States subsidiaries. A list of products to be boycotted will be announced in a few weeks, NRLC President Wanda Franz said at a June 1 news conference.

The other organizations announcing support for the boycott are Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, Christian Coalition, and Family Research Council.

"Southern Baptists are consumers, and we will urge our members to enthusiastically support the boycott," James A. Smith, the CLC's director of government relations, said at the news conference.

"There will be pastors who will, yes, stand up in their pulpit and say, 'These companies are responsible for bringing the death pill into America, and they need to be held responsible for it, and you should boycott these products,'" Smith said in response to a question.

At the repeated urging of the Clinton administration, Roussel Uclaf recently donated its United States patent rights for mifepristone, commonly known as RU-486, to the Population Council Inc., a nonprofit corporation. The action cleared the way for the Pop-

ulation Council to pursue the manufacture, testing, licensing, and marketing of the controversial pill in this country. RU-486 may be available for use in the United States by early 1996.

Roussel Uclaf, which has been lobbied fervently by both pro-life and pro-choice advocates in recent years, previously had refused to attempt introduction of the drug into this country because of the controversy.

"Hoechst AG and Roussel Uclaf may or may not be able to escape the legal responsibility by giving the patent away, but they cannot escape the moral responsibility for what will ensue," NRLC's Franz said.

Smith said, "The fact that these companies will not be directly marketing and selling RU-486 is little comfort to the millions of unborn children who will die because Hoechst and Roussel Uclaf caved in to pressure from the Clinton administration."

Boycott supporters not only criticized the Clinton administration for its part in promoting a new abortion technique but for RU-486's potential impact on women. Critics of RU-486 have charged it is unsafe sometimes for women.

"At a time when one in five couples are infertile, and when women are still struggling to come to grips with the failures of breast implants, the Dalkon Shield, and even the infertility of those women who first started taking the pill, why is our president advocating that women's bodies once again be molded in the shape of his world view?" said Kristi Hamrick of the Family Research Council in a written statement. "Even in foreign policy, abortion seems the only agenda President Clinton is fully committed to."

While Clinton has said he desires for abortion to be "safe and legal, but rare," Smith said, "RU-486 fails on all three stated goals of the president's abortion policy."

After the 1992 election, CLC Executive Director Richard Land warned Hoechst AG in a letter the CLC would hold Hoechst and Roussel Uclaf responsible if RU-486 were marketed in this country.

"If that happens, we will conduct a massive campaign to make all our constituencies aware of this responsibility and of the ways in which they might elect to use their purchasing choices in the commercial marketplace to make their displeasure known," Land wrote.

He also told the German company Clinton's election was not an affirmation of the Democrat's pro-choice abortion position. Hoechst's criteria of "acceptability (of abortion) by general and political society" for introduction of RU-486 into a country had not been met, Land said.

In 1990, Land traveled to Germany and France with a delegation led by NRLC to discourage company officials from attempting to introduce the pill into the United States.

RU-486 can be used only through the seventh week of pregnancy. The procedure requires several visits to a medical facility, the use of two different drugs, and close monitoring of the participants for complications.

More than 150,000 women have used RU-486 as an abortifacient in Europe. While RU-486 is being studied for other uses, it has been marketed as an abortion drug in France, Great Britain, and Sweden.

Strode is director, media and news information, Washington office, CLC.

Thursday, June 9, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Sign here

As Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin watches, Brotherhood Commission President James Williams signs an agreement for his agency to become a primary recruiter for overseas missions volunteers. The agreement, signed June 1 by the presidents of the two Southern Baptist Convention agencies, spells out the Foreign Mission Board as the volunteer sending agency, but calls on Brotherhood to find and train many of them. "We've got to multiply the efforts of our career missionaries," said FMB volunteer office director Jim Furgerson, a former Brotherhood staff member. "The use of quality volunteers is one way to do it." In the future, Brotherhood might provide 8,000 or more trained and qualified volunteers a year. (BP photo by Sandy King)

Brotherhood agrees to provide and train more overseas volunteers

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — With interest in volunteerism soaring, the Foreign Mission Board is asking the Brotherhood Commission to be a primary recruiter for its overseas volunteer force.

An agreement signed June 1 by the two agencies' presidents spells out the Foreign Mission Board as the sending agency for its projects but calls on the Brotherhood Commission to help overseas missionaries achieve their strategic aims by finding and training the right volunteers.

"This agreement clearly illustrates how Southern Baptist Convention agencies can work together to accomplish our Great Commission global strategies," said James Williams, president of the Brotherhood Commission, a national SBC agency for missions education and involvement based in Memphis.

The agreement signals a significant shift in Brotherhood involvement in recruiting for Foreign

Mission Board volunteer projects. Last year most Brotherhood volunteers who served overseas were recruited through state convention partnerships with the Foreign Mission Board. The new agreement will operate on a separate track from partnerships with state conventions.

The agreement gives a more active role to the Brotherhood Commission for recruiting and training volunteers for the large number of projects not related to state partnerships — and, more importantly, places a heavier burden on the Brotherhood to produce volunteers.

During the next year the commission plans to recruit and train an additional 3,000 to 3,500 volunteers, said Russell Griffin, assistant vice president for program services at the commission.

In the future, the Brotherhood's total contribution could mean 8,000 or more trained and qualified volunteers a year as missionaries continue to request increasing numbers of them, said Jim Furgerson, who directed the adult division at the Brotherhood Commission before joining the Foreign Mission Board staff last year.

Foreign Mission Board volunteer enlisters are running at top load already, he said.

"We want to have 100,000 volunteers who have served on the foreign mission field between now and the year 2000," Furgerson added. "We feel this is vital to penetrate every people group in the world."

Smoking ban proposal promises heated debate — for and against

By Paul G. Jones II

A rule to formally prohibit smoking in all workplaces has been proposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on April 5, 1994, seeking public comments — the first major step toward adoption of the final rule.

The action complies with a U.S. Court of Appeals order that OSHA defend itself against charges by ASH, a non-smokers' rights organization, that the federal agency unreasonably delayed dealing with the risks of environmental tobacco smoke.

The proposed rule would prohibit smoking in all workplaces. The only exception is if employers choose to establish completely enclosed smoking areas with separate ventilation systems to exhaust air directly to the outside.

These areas must "be maintained with negative pressure sufficient to contain tobacco smoke within the designated area," according to the proposed rule.

Employers are not required to establish such smoking areas, and most experts believe few employers will do so because of expense and problems maintaining such rooms.

Prior to the rule becoming final, OSHA must review any comments received. ASH expects numerous comments from the tobacco industry as well as others.

Many of the comments are expected to oppose the rule entirely, while other comments are expected to seek exemptions or otherwise attempt to weaken the proposed rule.

To counter opposition to the ban and help persuade OSHA to adopt the rule, it is vital for non-

smokers to write OSHA. Two points should be made in any comments:

— smoking should be prohibited in all workplaces with no exceptions.

— the smoking ban should be on a separate "fast-track," apart from the very different issue of indoor air quality (often called "sick building syndrome").

Comments regarding the proposed rule should be sent to:

OSHA Docket No. H-122
Room N-2625, Dept. of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

For additional information, contact the Christian Action Commission (CAC), Mississippi Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

Jones is executive director-treasurer, CAC.

Southeastern grants degrees

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., awarded degrees to two Mississippians during commencement exercises May 14.

Robert N. Pitts Jr. of Jackson and Donald Ray Silkwood of Long Beach received the master of divinity degree.



Jim Butler, pastor of Trinity Church, Southaven, stands in front of the building which bears his signature. He designed the whole facility. "I always had a desire to build a church from scratch," he said. "No one is more than 60 feet away from me in the worship center. It was designed that way on purpose."

Nigerian scam targets U.S. ministries, churches

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (EP) — Officials of St. Joseph's Cathedral in Sioux Falls, S.D., rejoiced when they received the news that a Nigerian bank was holding \$3 million for them — a bequest from Harry Olson, a former missionary. All they had to do, the letter said, was wire \$90,000 to the Central Bank of Nigeria to pay the "government inheritance tax" and fly to Nigeria to pick up the donation.

Church officials wired the money and made plans to travel to Nigeria. But their delight turned to dismay days later, when they learned that they'd been had.

The letter, like similar letters received by church leaders in at least three other states, was apparently part of an ongoing string of scams that have been run out of Nigeria for over a decade, accord-

ing to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The scam varies slightly depending on the intended victim. A corporation may be told that it has been awarded a large contract. A non-profit organization is notified of a large donation or bequest. Individuals may be convinced that they are due a large inheritance. In each case, "official" documents are sent, and a fee of some sort — an inheritance tax, business transaction fee, or something of that nature — is requested. Sometimes the payment of one fee only leads to a demand that another fee be paid. Some unsuspecting businesses have lost millions.

The U.S. government has no authority to stop Nigeria's solicitation scams, but warns Americans to beware.

BSSB closes its rec. dept., but...

MBCB's recreation dept. continues

Mississippi Baptists involved in church recreation ministries can still call on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for ministry needs and training, according to Mose Dangerfield, director of the MBCB's discipleship and family ministry department.

Dangerfield's comments come in response to the Baptist Sunday School Board's decision to eliminate its Church Recreation Department, as reported in the June 2 issue of *The Baptist Record*. The BSSB will continue to

offer church recreation resources on a limited scale through the board's Church Leadership Department.

"It needs to be said that Mississippi Baptist churches still have at their service church recreation consultant Wes Pegues through our department," said Dangerfield. "We will continue to respond to church and associational needs for training, information, and encouragement. There will be no change in our state."

Dangerfield said that while his

Southaven's Trinity Church has "something exciting" in growth

By Shannon T. Simpson

"There is something exciting happening here."

Jim Butler frequently says that of the church he pastors, and he's out to make sure every visitor feels that way, too. He must be doing something right.

The church Butler pastors is Trinity in Southaven, the fastest growing church in Mississippi and one of the fastest growing churches in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Last year, Trinity grew by 34%, increased its budget 35%, then had a budget overage of about \$300,000.

This year, the church expects another 35% increase in budget, and is already exceeding projected offerings by \$6,000 a week. So far, the church's growth rate is holding at about 25%.

In April, Trinity set a new record (900) for average Sunday School attendance.

Such figures have won the church five Eagle awards, the highest recognition from the Baptist Sunday School Board for attendance growth (see sidebar).

The church has grown from a beginning 200 average in worship in 1990, to an average of 1,016 in April, 936 in May.

The three-year-old church is the product of a merger of three congregations: LaBelle Place and Trinity of Memphis, and Trinity South of Hom Lake.

Both Trinity and LaBelle Place had been two of the strongest congregations in Memphis until they began to decline in the mid-'70s. The Trinity South congregation was formed when younger families from Trinity, Memphis, began to meet at Hom Lake in an effort to persuade the Trinity congregation to move south instead of dying where they were.

Butler said, "God miraculously put these groups together... The people felt it was their only hope... to merge and relocate."

The three churches jointly called Butler as pastor, and he and

his family moved to Memphis in 1990. Shortly afterward, the Trinity, Southaven, congregation purchased 21 acres of land, and began to aggressively plan for growth.

With a beginning average attendance of less than 300, the church broke ground for its Phase 1 (parking, educational space for 550, office complex, kitchen, fellowship hall, and 1,000-seat worship center) on Easter 1991. Cost for that phase was \$3.3 million.

"The people captured the vision, began praying," said Butler, "and God took over from there."

Butler said the building has been too small from the start.

"My vision was to try to lead the church to double to 500 in five

He said people often ask him why Trinity is growing so fast. He has two words for the answer: "Hard work."

"Most pastors and church members want the growth results without the long hours and the hard work. It can't be done."

Underneath that work ethic are several things: the focus on Sunday School and ministry, and the spirit in the church and staff ("one of phenomenal unity," said Butler).

The focus on Sunday School is dictated by the demographics of DeSoto County, heavily weighted in the "married/30s" category. Typical church members are young families, so the church's prime commitment in space and dollars is to preschool and children's ministries.

The church attracts people because it puts them to work, makes them feel important and accepted, Butler said.

"It only takes six to eight weeks after a person has 'walked the aisle' to set with them what kind of member they will be," said Butler.

Austin Moore, assistant pastor, "plugs the back door" to keep members from "falling through the cracks." For 18 months after they place membership in the church, Moore tracks by computer their Sunday School attendance and involvement.

Life-oriented messages from the pulpit, deacons who consider themselves assistant pastors, a strong prayer ministry, tough stands on political issues, and avoiding the "ownership mentality" ("It's not 'mine, mine' — it's all God's") are also factors in the Trinity growth formula, according to Butler.

"Churches decide not to grow when they become an exclusive club," Butler said. "Here, the people have made the supreme commitment to reach others. (With that mentality) you could put a church on every corner, and they all would grow."

"This is not something I'm doing," concluded Butler. "We're into something so big it's not humanly possible, anyway."

Trinity receives Baptist Sunday School Board's highest honor

Trinity is one of only two churches in Mississippi to have earned multiple Eagle awards.

The Eagle is recognition for achieving growth through the use of the Growth Spiral. A church may earn an Eagle award when the Sunday School enrollment has a net gain of 182, there are at least 10 additional Sunday School teaching units, and at least 20 new Sunday School workers have been added.

A church must achieve the above statistics and maintain them for at least six months to earn the Eagle.

The other Mississippi church is Colonial Hills, also in Southaven.

years," he continued. "Did God have a shock in store for me! On our first Sunday, Easter of 1992, there were 1,200 people who showed up for worship. The church kids me that I'm the one with no faith. These people have no fear to borrow money to build."

October will see completion of building Phases 2 and 3 (family life center and preschool/children's wing). After their completion, the plant will have 93,000 square feet, at a cost of about \$6 million. The church will soon enter Phase 4, to build a fourth educational wing.

Trinity has expanded its facilities through a series of capital stewardship campaigns. It has committed to finance its building projects only through these campaigns, not through budget funds. The church expects to retire the last \$3 million in debt in five years.

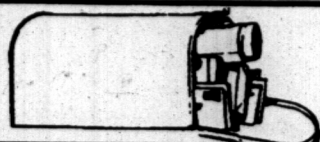
"It's been exciting for me to watch the progress of Trinity," said Randy Tompkins, former consultant for associational work and growth with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Sunday School Department. "Many churches are looking for 'things that work.' Trinity is growing by using the basics and making them people-oriented."

An Oklahoma native, Butler holds a master's degree from Southwestern Seminary and a doctoral degree in church growth from Luther Rice.

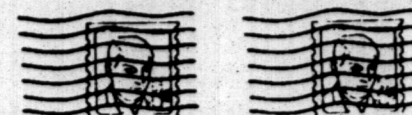
Midwestern graduates two Mississippians

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Two Mississippians were among those receiving degrees in commencement ceremonies at Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., on May 21.

Wade "Barry" Cappleman from Ripley was awarded the master of divinity-correlated degree; Don L. Robbins of Hattiesburg received the master of religious education degree.



Letters to the editor



Seeks a pastor

Editor:

The Anderson Memorial Baptist Church of Schweinfurt, Germany, a military congregation of 50 people, is in need of a pastor. Our congregation is affiliated with the European Baptist Convention (English language). Please contact: Annette Kirk, B 5/41, Unit 25862 Box 774, APO AE 09033.

Thank you for your assistance.

Annette Kirk
Schweinfurt, Germany

Looking for his Bible

Editor:

I need the help of your readers. Last July 16-20, I was part of the Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir. In touring the churches, I lost the Bible I was using. It is a King James, Thompson Chain Reference Bible with a burgundy leather cover. On the inside of the front cover is engraved Kent Burgess' name.

I have telephoned the churches where we attended to inquire of the lost and found, but without any response. This Bible belongs to my brother and it was a gift to him. If any of your readers have any information on this Bible, please call collect: (601) 879-8370; or return to: Wesley Burgess, P.O. Box 409, Flora, MS 39071.

Thanks so much for your cooperation.

Wesley Burgess
Flora

A little illustration

Editor:

The book *Sneetches* by Dr. Seuss should be required reading for every member of the Southern Baptist Convention. If you have read it before, read it again. If you haven't read it, then find a copy and read it.

I overheard Ed and Jim talking recently about the convention:

"What side are you on?" Jim asked Ed.

"What side of what?"

"Are you a 'they' or a 'them'?"

"I don't know. Who is 'they' and 'them'?"

"'Them' are the ones who used to be in charge. 'They' are the ones in control now."

"I thought God was supposed to be in control."

"Yeah, he is, but well, some kind of got sidetracked or under the track or something."

"I'm not either one. I guess I'm a 'theym,'" said Ed.

"A 'theym,'" mused Jim. "Hey, I've got an idea. Why don't we set up a booth at the convention and sell T-shirts. We could have three choices of imprint: a 'them'; a 'they'; and a 'theym.' That way everybody would know your position and best of all, you would know theirs."

"We would probably do a lot of business. Well, Ed, what do you think?"

"I've just got one question," said Ed. "What has all this got to do with the kingdom of God?"

"Well, maybe nothing, but maybe after most of their money

has been spent on labels then everyone would decide to forget all the labels. Then the whole group could get on with the work God wants us to do together."

"That's a little far out. But not as far out as some things I've heard about within the group. It might be worth a try," Ed said thoughtfully. "What are we waiting for? Where do we get a labeling machine and some T-shirts? Hold on, what kind of price?"

"Eight or multiples of eight," said Jim. "Because eight is the number of beginning again."

Name withheld

Opposes coast site

Editor:

In reference to organized opposition as to locating a casino near our Gulf Coast Assembly facility, I offer these thoughts. I oppose gambling (gaming is the buzz word) with every fiber of my body, but it is now a futile battle. Even though we may win this particular skirmish, Henderson Point is a prime location and they have the money to force the issue in their favor. Recent referenda also indicate many Baptists are not inclined to vote against this monster. Since Romans 8:28 succinctly states, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God....," I propose we simply sell that property to them, for the highest price we can get, and use the money to further God's work elsewhere. I am certain that many will object on moral and religious grounds, but

we are faced with a situation that has no clear-cut Christian solution. I am simply suggesting that we take the least objectionable option, sell, and move far away from this abomination before God gets tired of it, and sends Camille II.

Since I am also certain that objections to selling may be based on other motives, I offer these thoughts. When I am near that location I am reminded of the struggle to keep it on the coast for the last 40 or so years. In those early years the coast was known for its wide open liquor establishments, and this, coupled with the struggle for a Southern Baptist retreat led to some astute observations. The late Montrose, Miss., sage Jimmy Ward once editorialized in the old *Jackson Daily News* that president-elect John Kennedy had three major reform bills he wanted to pass. These would allow Jews to eat pork, Catholics to eat meat on Fridays, and Mississippi Baptists to drink liquor in their own home town. Could a similar situation exist, and if it does, perhaps the above Scripture quote would be pertinent in a perverted way. It offers a perfectly good reason for visiting the wide open coast, and for those inclined to peep inside a casino, it seems one will soon be within easy walking distance. To those who have no such inclination and would never think of using the facility as a cover to visit the coast, I apologize. To the other Baptists, I offer the old proverb: "The bitten dog bites!"

Donald R. Windham, pastor
West Poplarville Church
Poplarville

Confused by change

Editor:

Many churches of our state may not be aware that the Baptist Sunday School Board has undergone some major restructuring and down-sizing over the last year. In many areas, this action was probably needed; however, recent events have left me baffled and confused. The Board down-sized the Church Recreation Department to just a section of another department about a year ago, giving early retirement to many longtime employees. Also, Centrifuge and Crosspoint were taken from that department and given to the Discipleship Section. These two camp events are some of the Sunday

School Board's most profitable events and they were developed by the Church Recreation Department. At this time, we were assured all support to this area of ministry would remain strong. The new Church Recreation Section, having lost its most profitable ventures, were asked to develop a new innovative Vacation Bible School material on which their section would depend for its survival. They did! Adventure Week was selected as the top VBS material on the market in *Children's Ministry* magazine, by Group Publications. But some at the Board, instead of being glad such a tool for the gospel was available for the churches, chose to downgrade Adventure Week as an inferior product. This message was even given out at our state VBS training meetings. The Board has also cancelled the *Church Recreation* magazine. The facts are clear — the Church Recreation Department and now Section have continually produced quality programs and publications since 1954. Why are we fixing something that is not broken?

All this is background for my concern. As of May 24, we no longer have a Church Recreation Department or Section. Where will the local church go for support in this area of ministry? Does this mean the Board does not think Church Recreation is a viable area of ministry? Who will help and give support to the church recreation minister or activities minister, who counts heavily on the Church Recreation Section of the Board?

Many souls are brought to Jesus through recreation — many who would not have come to a regular church service. Recreation is a tool of God and deserves the support from our convention. In February of 1954 the Southern Baptist Convention saw this as a much-needed area of ministry that deserved a department to offer local churches support. An independent consulting firm and an internal committee made these decisions to do away with this section. Should this not have been brought up for a convention decision, since in fact the convention voted to form the Church Recreation Department?

Ronny Joe Webb
Minister of activities,
Senior adults, single adults
First, Laurel

Southwestern graduates five with Mississippi ties

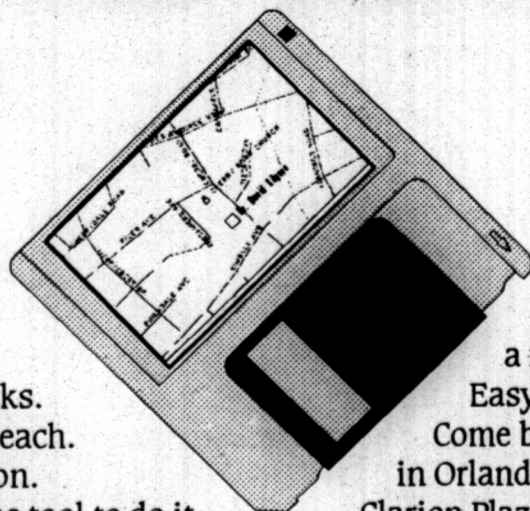
FORT WORTH — Five people with Mississippi ties received degrees from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth during commencement exercises May 13.

The master of arts degree was awarded to: Brian S. Blaine of Winona (with emphasis in marriage and family counseling, religious education), Judy L.

Bracken of Meridian (emphasis in religious education), and Jay A. Robertson of Jackson (emphasis in marriage and family counseling, religious education).

The master of divinity degree was awarded to: Rickey Blythe of Baldwin and Bobby Jones of Jackson.

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Just for the Record



Highland Church, Meridian, held its Missions Organization Recognition Service on May 4. Pictured, are Mission Friends, Cheri Hucks, director; RAs, Kelly Richardson, director, and GAs, JoAnn Goldman, director. Vicki Mathis is WMU director. Jim Brannon is pastor.

First Church, Jackson, will host a **Single Parent Seminar** on June 24-25. Featured speaker will be Polly Cooper, psychologist and counselor on staff at First Church, Dallas. She will present topics designed to help single parents see successes and deal with trials. Child care will be provided with an early sign-up. Fee for the seminar is \$20. Registration begins at 5:30 p.m. on the 24th. For more information, call First Church at (601) 949-1906.

Slayden Church, Lamar, marked its **125th anniversary** on May 22. Over 400 people attended Heritage Day and dedication of the new sanctuary. The church is currently in the midst of relocating to the grounds of the former Slayden High School and Marshall County Agricultural High School. Bill Wage, architect; Butch Knight, Arkadelphia Church pastor; and Don Stanfill, Marshall/Lafayette director of missions, participated in the dedication ceremony. Bill Hardin is pastor.

The **North American Conference for Itinerant Evangelists** (NACIE 94) will be held at the Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Ky., June 28-July 1. Some 3,000 individuals — itinerant evangelists and spouses, pastors, seminary professors and students, and volunteer stewards — from over 65 denominations across North America will participate in this event. For more information, contact Pete Whitaker at (713) 353-4905, or Linda Nelson at (612) 335-1385.

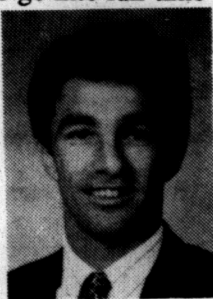
Mississippi College Division of Continuing Education will offer a variety of children's programs throughout the summer. Applications are now being accept-

ed. Programs scheduled to begin in June include: All the World's a Stage; Beginning Tennis for Youth; the Radio Workshop; Effective Study Skills; and summer camps in academics and sports which will include a high school Newspaper Workshop and speech

and debate camp. For information concerning the sports camps call: baseball (925-3346); boys basketball (925-3819), girls basketball (925-3363), and cheerleader clinic (925-3365). For additional information concerning summer programs call 925-3831.

Staff Changes

Clay Chancellor, pastor of Mt. Zion Church in Clarke Association, has chosen to go into full-time evangelism. Mt. Zion has also invited him to remain as pastor. Pastor-evangelist is now his title. Chancellor is in a wheelchair most of the time. He was injured in an automobile accident five years ago. He is still able to stand while preaching and to drive. His evangelistic organization is "Whirlwind." He can be contacted at (601) 644-3870, or 776-2911. His address is 15768 County Road 514, Meridian, MS 39301. Chancellor is married and has three daughters.



Highland Church, Crystal Springs, has called **Phil Mullins** as pastor effective May 1 and **Perry White** as minister of music effective May 5. Mullins of Harrisville is a native of Copiah County. His previous place of service was Easthaven, Richland. He received his education at the University of Southern Mississippi. White is a native of Hazlehurst. His previous place of service was Gallman Church, Gallman.

New Hope, Starkville, has called **Cindy Wasson** as music director and **Tim Armstrong** as education director. Bob Brandon is pastor.

Hepzibah, Silver Creek, has called **Paul D. Wilbourn** of Clay as pastor, effective May 29. Wilbourn received his education at Mississippi State University and New Orleans Seminary.

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

Mississippi College, Mississippi's oldest and largest private college, invites applications and nominations for the position of Director of Admissions. Mississippi College, one of three academic institutions supported by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, enrolls approximately 3,800 students in the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, School of Education, School of Law, School of Nursing, and School of Graduate Studies.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Director provides leadership for planning, development, and management of programs, personnel, and budget related to undergraduate admissions. The Director also formulates and implements recruitment strategies and is responsible for training, motivating, and leading the professional and support staff. Off campus recruitment will require travel to high schools, community colleges, and churches.

Minimum Qualifications

The position requires a Master's Degree and a strong record of accomplishment in the profession. The candidate must possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills, exhibit knowledge of current enrollment and financial aid issues, demonstrate the organizational skills necessary to manage the daily activities of the admissions staff and evidence a commitment to the value of Christian higher education.

Application Procedure

Candidates should submit a letter of application; a resume; the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five professional references to Dr. Van Quick, Chair, Director of Admissions Search Committee, Mississippi College, P.O. Box 4007, Clinton, MS 39058. Applications will be received from June 1 through June 30 or until the position is filled. The position is expected to be filled by July 15.

Nat'l Acteens Convention will feature Dove winner

More than 10,000 Acteens and their leaders are expected to attend the National Acteens Convention at the Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center in Birmingham, Ala., June 21-24.

Theme for the meeting will be "Heart of the Journey." Featured performers will be Point of Grace, the 1994 Dove Awards' "New Artist of the Year," Michele Wagner, and soloist Alicia Williamson.

Six general sessions of the convention will include a commitment service, commissioning service, interviews with missionaries, and presentation by MissionsUSA Live, music/drama team sponsored by the Home Mission Board.

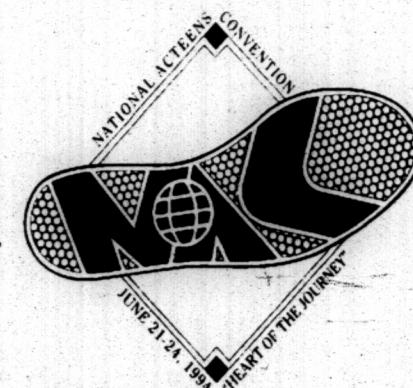
Conference topics will include: AIDS, living in blended families, homosexuality, self-esteem, time management, gangs, eating disorders, making decisions, setting career goals, witnessing, prayer, and race relations.

Following the Wednesday evening session, Acteens will celebrate the 25th anniversary

of the organization.

Acteens are asked to bring to the convention a teddy bear or a pair of inexpensive canvas shoes (bagged in ziploc bags and marked with size). These items will be collected and given to home missionaries to use in ministry.

Registration fee is \$60 per person, exclusive of travel and housing expenses. For more information, contact the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union offices, (601) 968-3800.



Homecomings

Rehobeth (Rankin): June 12; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch served in fellowship hall, noon; afternoon singing with Gateway to Heaven Singers; Wayne Riley, former pastor, message; Wendell Wiggins,

former music director, music; Martis Jenkins, pastor.

County Line, Mendenhall: 117th anniversary; June 12; worship, 10:45 a.m.; noon luncheon; Ted Dukes, pastor.

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LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ed.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

I thought I would take a different tack in this week's column.

As I sit in the comfort of my home and read about the violence, decaying morals, and rampant anger of children killing each other as well as adults, I am struck by the question: "Why?"

What is the answer? God's people — especially men — must take the lead by loving our children and being available to them. Children today need to see authority that is loving and attentive. They need to constantly see the strength and presence of men; they are bombarded by so many gray areas that right and wrong is no longer apparent to them.

Children need examples in their fathers, grandfathers, Sunday School teachers, scout leaders, coaches, and neighbors, of men who stand for the principles of the Ten Commandments. Those are the guidelines for success and empowerment young people need in their lives.

We are losing our children to unnecessary death due to disease

and violence, basically because they are being taught, "I need this because it will make me happy," instead of "no."

Parenting is not easy, but we must stand shoulder to shoulder as Christians and create a defense that will empower our children to withstand the evils Satan throws at them every day of their lives.

As our children watch us "fight the good fight" (2 Tim. 4:7-8), they will be impressed with the importance of working through difficulties to reach a goal. You can do this in three ways:

— Know your priorities. Take time each day for God, yourself (hobby, exercise, rest), and family.

— If you are married, continue growing in the relationship by "dating," talking, and sharing.

— Spend time with your children. Play with them, talk with them (be sure to listen), and encourage them daily.

Just some thoughts from a fellow struggler.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Vacation Bible Schools

First of Runnelstown, Petal: June 13-17; 8-11 a.m. daily; nursery through 6th grade; Debbie Creel, director.

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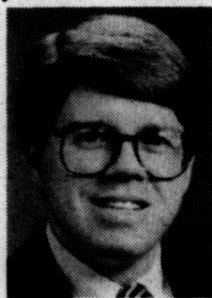
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Southern awards degrees

In commencement exercises held May 20 at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., four students with Mississippi ties received degrees.

They are: T. James Anderson of Edwards, the master of divinity; and Bill G. Hardin of Pontotoc, the doctor of ministry.

Also graduated were Dodie Lynn Huff-Fletcher and Kenneth Ray Shaw.



Hardin

Thursday, June 9, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 2

Names in the News

NASHVILLE (BP) — Leonard E. Hill announced retirement plans after more than 36 years with the Executive Committee, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer. Hill will retire effective Sept. 1, having served as assistant convention manager, or convention manager, for 36 annual meetings of the SBC.

ABILENE, Texas (BP) — Bill Bruster, pastor of First Church, Abilene, Texas, resigned May 22 to become western regional coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. According to the Abilene Reporter-News, Bruster said he didn't make his final decision about the CBF offer until May 20 although earlier news stories indicated he had been offered the new position. The CBF is a fledgling group of moderate Southern Baptists who are critical of SBC leadership. "I am resigning to help create tomorrow denominationally for our children and grandchildren," he said, adding, "The firing of Dr. Russell Dilday (as president of Southwestern Seminary, Bruster's alma mater) helped push me over the edge."

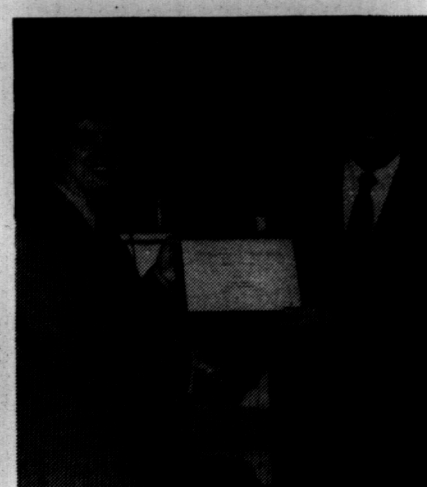
Roy A. "Buddy" Sheriff was awarded the bachelor of arts in theology (*magna cum laude*) degree from Florida Theological College in Graceville, Fla., during commencement exercises May 20. He is a native of Gulfport.

David Eastland was recently ordained to the gospel ministry by McLaurin Heights Church, Pearl. The Pearl native received his education at Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary.



Eastland

Kermit McGregor, pastor of First Church, Mendenhall, is in Emory Hospital in Atlanta, where he received a heart transplant on June 7. The family is grateful for the financial and prayer support which have been offered on his behalf. Contributions may be made to the Kermit McGregor Heart Transplant Fund, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 366, Mendenhall, MS 39114.



Richard P. Williams was recently ordained as a deacon by Taylor Church, Taylor. Paul H. Russell, pastor, gave the charge to Williams, the deacon body, and the congregation, and presented the certificate of ordination.

Bivocational pastor J.D. Batson killed

J.D. Batson, 56, of Poplarville, died May 26 from injuries sustained in a road construction accident. He was the bivocational pastor of Parkview Church, Picayune.



Batson

He previously served as associate pastor of Union Church, Picayune, and as minister of music and senior adults at First, Poplarville. He and his wife Ethel served as music missionaries to Brazil, 1973-79.

A native of Wiggins, Batson was a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary.

Funeral services were held May 28 at First Church, Poplarville. Burial followed in Thomas Price Memorial Cemetery in Wiggins.

In addition to his wife Ethel, Batson is survived by his parents Mr. and Mrs. Hollis Batson of Wiggins; four daughters, Cindy Broome of Wesson; Angie Kirtley of Staunton, Va.; Lisa Browning of Clinton; and Laurie Rhodes of Poplarville; five sisters, and a brother.

Pay-per-view playoff gives church chance to be friendly

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP) — The Phoenix Suns played basketball in the worship center of North Phoenix Church May 19.

Well, actually the playoff game with the Houston Rockets was projected on a big screen inside the church, but it still drew a crowd of 2,500 screaming fans.

The day before the game, Dimension Cable approached the church as a possible pay-per-view site.

For Dimension, North Phoenix offered an atmosphere suitable for families. Most public pay-per-view locations are bars and sports clubs.

For the church, it was a match made in heaven.

With thoughts of all of the people who would be there who would otherwise never go through the church doors, plans were quickly made to ensure a pleasant experience.

North Phoenix members volunteered on Wednesday night to be

on hand. They had no assignment other than to be Christlike, to be friendly, and helpful.

During time outs, the church showed slides advertising its ministries, including singles activities and preschool child care.

Pastor Dan Yearly welcomed the crowd at the start of the game and at the end thanked them for coming. There was no high-pressure sales pitch, just his final words of, "Remember, win or lose, North Phoenix Church is here for you."

Reflecting on the experience the following day, Yearly said he enjoyed the fact that a local radio station was now calling North Phoenix "The Papal Palace," after America West Arena's nickname of "The Purple Palace."

"I'm glad," he said. "The name of our church is on the lips of more people, and they had a good experience last night."

Revival Dates

First, Mt. Olive: June 24-26; youth revival; Chris Turner, student, Jones Junior College, evangelist; Robbie Gandy, student, Oak Grove High School, Hattiesburg, music.

Hepzibah, Silver Creek: June 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; James Messer, Ala., evangelist; Chris Turnage, Arm Church, music.

County Line, Mendenhall: June 13-15; 7 p.m. nightly; Danny Berry, Brandon, and Robert

Toney, Liberty, evangelists; Ted Dukes, pastor.

Good Hope, Purvis: June 12-15; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner at 12:30 p.m., and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Robert Lee, Lynette, Ala., evangelist.

Gregory Chapel, Amory: July 24-29; Monroe Association-wide revival; William Cook, Liberty Church (Monroe), evangelist; James Harrington, director of missions.

A Pre-Planned Approach to the Cash Burial Question

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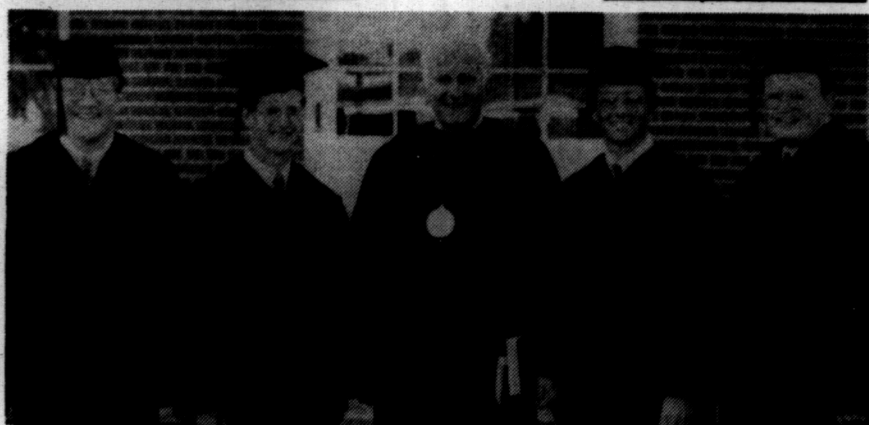
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Mississippi students who received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises May 20 are (left to right): Russell D. Barksdale, Carthage, doctor of philosophy; Gary L. Permenter, West Point, doctor of ministry; Landrum P. Leavell II, seminary president; Jerry L. Smith, Jackson, doctor of philosophy; and Scott K. Thomas, Jackson, doctor of philosophy.

Mississippians receive degrees from NOBTS

Four Mississippians received their doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises on May 20. They include: Russell D. Barksdale, Tulsa, Okla., pastor of First Church, Carthage, doctor of philosophy; Gary Permenter, West Point, minister to students at Mt. Vernon Church, Columbus, doctor of ministry; Jerry L. Smith, Jackson, associate pastor of First Church, Covington, La., doctor of philosophy; and Scott Thomas, Jackson, associate pastor of Emmanuel Church, Lafayette, La., doctor of philosophy.

Receiving their masters' of divinity degrees during the same ceremony were Jim Cain, Starkville, minister of youth at Monticello Church, Monticello; James P. Cook Jr., Batesville, minister of youth and recreation for First Church, Bogalusa, La.; David B. Eastland, Pearl; L. Randall Jackson, Sturgis, co-pastor at Emmaus Church, Tickfaw, La.; James O. Lee, Yazoo City, pastor of Beulah Church, Lexington; John David Lee, Greenville, pastor of Southside Church, Benoit; Larry D. Robertson, Savannah, Tenn., pastor of Steep Hollow

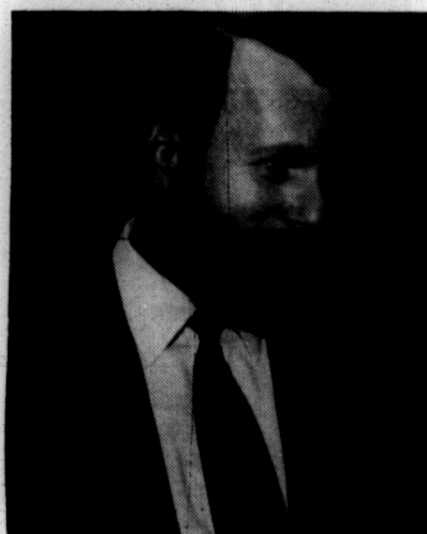
Church, Poplarville; Daniel Graham Williams, Jackson, minister of youth and activities for First Church, Hobart, Okla.; Harold Ray Williams, West Point, pastor at Westside Church, Wewahatcha, Fla.; and James T. Wright Sr., Laurel, minister of education at Roseland Park Church, Picayune.

Receiving their master of arts in Christian education degrees were William E. Salley II, Lexington; Anita Malley, Magee, coordinator of home services for Lakeview Shepherd Center, New Orleans; R. Scott Mercer, Meridian, minister of youth at Immanuel Church in Hammond, La.; and Ronald Alan Pannel, Gulfport, minister of youth for Palestine Church, Bogalusa, La.

Receiving other degrees were Tim Posey, Brookhaven, chaplain at New Orleans Seminary, bachelor of general studies degree; Susan Borden Sanson, New York, general studies degree; Dean Cirelli, Jersey City, N. J., minister of youth for Christ Church, Houma, La., associate of divinity in Christian education ministry degree; and Revis Leon Wallace, Bogue Chitto, associate of divinity in pastoral ministry degree.

Former missionary Sprinkle is FMB's new prayer director

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Former missionary Randy Sprinkle joined the Foreign Mission Board staff June 1 as director of its inter-



Sprinkle

national prayer strategy office.

Sprinkle, 44, from Jefferson City, Mo., succeeds Minette Drumwright, who retired March 31. He assumes the missions prayer role after working four years as associate pastor of First Church, St. Joseph, Mo.

Before that, Sprinkle and his wife, Nancy, of St. Louis, were missionaries for 15 years in southern and eastern Africa. They resigned from mission work in 1990 because of family health problems.

The task includes: helping channel thousands of foreign missions prayer requests to Southern Baptists each month, overseeing the board's toll-free mission PrayerLine (1-800-359-PRAY), and coordinating prayer partnerships between mission fields overseas and state Baptist conventions.

HMB's Lewis defends signing Catholic/evangelical report

ATLANTA (BP) — Saying he must have the freedom to "exercise prophetic leadership," Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis defended a document he signed this spring on evangelical and Roman Catholic relationships.

In a 10-page letter to HMB directors, with copies to state Baptist newspaper editors and others, Lewis rejected a call that he publicly withdraw his endorsement of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium."

"You must allow your president to exercise prophetic leadership — freedom to preach what he believes he should preach... to stand where he feels he should stand on significant issues," he wrote. "If you're a pastor, I imagine you expect that from your church; and I expect that from you."

Lewis also refuted charges the report restricts mission efforts.

A "strong emphasis on missions and world evangelism is interwoven throughout the document," he wrote. "How anyone could read this document and con-

clude it opposes evangelism and world missions, or even implies such, I can't imagine."

Pointing to the document's supporters, Lewis listed 11 religious leaders who signed the paper. "Why do you suppose such evangelical leaders as Charles Colson and Pat Robertson would sign such a document and rejoice in doing so?"

The paper was not designed to address doctrinal differences between the two groups, Lewis noted, referring to a portion that states some longstanding differences "may never be resolved short of the Kingdom Come."

While the report does not compromise doctrine, Lewis wrote, it gains Catholic recognition of evangelicals as fellow Christians, not members of sects or cults. "This certainly signals a new attitude on the part of the Catholic Church."

Lewis also reviewed the document's condemnation of proselytizing, calling it the "most misrepresented, misinterpreted, and misunderstood" portion.

During their meeting, Catholics

charged evangelicals with "sheep stealing," and evangelicals responded that the Great Commission mandates to "preach the gospel to every creature," Lewis wrote.

"This was undoubtedly the one area of greatest tension and most extensive discussion," he wrote. "We clearly stated that our primary thrust is to evangelize the unsaved, regardless of where they may be members, and to congregationalize the unchurched, even if they are inactive members of some denomination, even our own."

Lewis' one concession to critics concerns a passage referring to the Catholic doctrine of salvation through the sacrament of baptism.

"It appears those of us who endorsed the document are lending credence to that heresy," he wrote. "Frankly, I simply did not catch this when I reviewed the original draft or I would have insisted on a rewrite. I apologize."

Lewis also mailed the letter to SBC President Ed Young, former SBC presidents, the SBC Inter-Agency Council, Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press.

SBC

From page 2

ed States for Foreign Missions was headed for breakup. Baptists of the South had been excluded from the acting boards of the foreign and home mission societies. They had received only what home mission efforts they paid for while other areas received more than they contributed. Now Southerners were told they were unworthy to be appointed missionaries. Baptists of the South could stand no more. They would separate.

On May 8, 1845, representatives from Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, and the District of Columbia met to form a new body of Baptists. Letters of support were received from Baptists in Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Florida.

But what kind of body would it be? The Home Mission Society had not refused to support slaveholders as missionaries. In fact, they had appointed a slaveholder only three months earlier. The foreign mission society was the only one which had refused to appoint slaveholders.

W.B. Johnson was appointed to chair the committee to draft a constitution for the new body. Some say Johnson already had a draft of a proposed constitution in his coat

pocket. It was a constitution based on the convention plan of organization, the same kind of organization he had championed 30 years earlier at the Triennial Convention. The new body elected Johnson as its first president.

With the adoption of the new constitution the question was settled. Southern Baptists would follow the convention model. The break with the foreign mission society and the home mission society was complete. A new denomination of Baptists in the United States was now a reality.

Thus began the Southern Baptist Convention, destined to become the largest Baptist body in the world.

Terry is editor, Missouri WORD & WAY

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Uniform God's call, our response



By Doug Bain
Exodus 3:1-4:17

To be sure, it is not a call for all to be the same or to do the same — but God's call does come to all. The calling of Moses may lend perspective as we learn from Moses' doubts and destiny. The issue for us is about our sense of destiny to be part of what God is doing.

The Exodus text shows God to be on the move, but many years of desert experience unfold before Moses would situate himself within God's purpose, before he would define himself in terms of what God was planning, before his identity was shaped in light of God's intentions. Before he became the first president of Southwestern Seminary, years of teenage alcoholism and divorce unfolded for B.H. Carroll, as his new biography candidly shows. But as with Moses, Carroll, and many another, God's persistence was at work to alter history, to unleash the unlimited potential of such unlikely people.

Did God's plan for promise-keeping and nation-making have to wait for Moses to get his life together on the back side of the Midian pastureland where he fled to pay for achieving justice on his own terms? For a time, apparently. But notice the resolve of God when the fullness of time did arrive (3:7-9): "I have observed... I have heard... I know... I have come down to bring them up... I have seen... I will send...."

God's plan and his call (3:10). In his overall plan to bring creation to its full potential, God will use a representative people, using the human figure of Moses to deliver and shape them. The call is stated simply, "Come, I will send you" to confront those who hold my people locked within oppressive cycles of domination. This then is how God works within history to alter history — through people who are unlikely but unlimited, resistant but repentant.

God's revelation of himself (3:11-15). Before God even finishes introducing himself, Moses digs in his heels. In the first of some five excuses, Moses does not ask, "How can we accomplish this together?" He asks, "Who am I" to do this? That is not an issue, Moses. What makes the difference is who God is.

The response of insignificance is followed by a response of unbelief. Moses basically asks, "But who are you?" Forget the Egyptians — what about Israelites — how will I identify you even to them? The revelation further reveals the difference between Yahweh and the gods of the ancient Near East. God is the one present not just in nature but in historical affairs. "I am the one who really is, the one present and active in history. I am the God-Reality. I am not remote, silent, unrevealed, inactive. I am the one sending this messenger. But I am not sending truth — I am active truth. Tell them this I AM God has sent you."

Moses (whose Egyptian name suggests "a god born," as *Ra-meses* or *Thut-mose*) was more true to his Egyptian heritage than to his Hebrew heritage — until he encountered The Name. When he encountered this Yahweh, Moses' Egyptian name acquired new meaning and a new identity for Moses, for he would see the people of Yahweh born in the Exodus.

Resistant response (4:1-5, 10-13). Moses continues with his series of excuses veiled as self-questions. In 4:1, he basically asks, "How can they know? What credentials can I show, by what authority do I go?" The response from God is for Moses to take what is in his hand.

The question in 4:10 is not, "How can they know?" but "How can I know? What of my inadequacy, and how do I succeed?" Moses is in bondage to a false sense of inferiority and inadequacy, requiring liberation himself. His inarticulate speech was not the main problem — it was his foot-dragging heart. And God said, "Just go and leave the communicating to me. After all, I created speech."

Then the real question in 4:13: "God, how can I get out of this?" What an incredible picture of one person's attempt to evade God's purpose for his life, to nurture inferiority, to hide behind inadequacies. But God stays with Moses, he does not give up on him. And in spite of our hesitant unwillingness, God continues to pursue us relentlessly. He will not let us go. He makes our positive response to his call both possible and necessary!

Bain is professor of biblical and related studies, Blue Mountain College.

Bible Book Jesus unjustly condemned



By Dan Howard
John 18, 19

Several years ago I served as a character witness for a person who had been falsely accused in a traffic accident. The accused was providing transportation for a group returning from camp when the accident occurred. After all the evidence was presented the accused was acquitted and found innocent of all charges. It became very obvious during the trial that the person charged was innocent.

Jesus was innocent, yet unjustly condemned. Pilate failed to acknowledge the truth concerning Jesus. He compromised what he knew to be the truth with tragic results.

Pilate's examination of Jesus (18:33-36). Pilate was the procurator or governor of Judea. He was in charge of the administrative and financial management of the country. The Jews despised Pilate and Pilate despised the Jews. When Pilate became governor he did two things that caused the Jews to hate him. First, when he came to Jerusalem on a state visit he entered with the Roman symbol of an eagle sitting atop a pole. All previous governors would remove the eagle because of the Jew's opposition to idol worship. Second, when he needed money for a water project he took the money from the temple treasury. Even though there was intense hatred, they compromised their feelings and joined forces against Jesus. Jesus was brought before Pilate because he was the only one who could pronounce the death sentence upon Jesus.

The Jewish leaders would not enter Pilate's judgment hall, the Praetorium, for fear of defilement. Pilate compromised with them and agreed to conduct the trial by shuttling between Jesus and his accusers.

When Pilate returned to the judgment hall from hearing the accusations against Christ, he asked Jesus if he was the King of the Jews? The charge against Jesus according to the question was one of treason against Rome. Jesus' response in verse 34 was an attempt to get Pilate to consider this question personally. All people are faced with deciding if Jesus is who he claimed to be.

Pilate's attempts to release Jesus (19:5-7). Pilate left Jesus and went to the Jews. He stated to them that he could find no guilt in him. He sought to fulfill a Passover custom by releasing a prisoner. The crowd wanted Barabbas to be released. Pilate proceeded to scourge Jesus in an attempt at possibly satisfying the crowd's anger against Jesus. Pilate then brought Jesus out before the crowd. In a third attempt to release Jesus because of finding no guilt, Pilate told them to do whatever they desired to do with Jesus.

Pilate's further conversation with Jesus (19:8-11). Pilate was a very superstitious man. When he heard that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, he became frightened. The thought of possibly condemning "a god" had Pilate afraid. When Jesus would not respond to Pilate's questions, Pilate sought to remind Jesus of the authority he possessed over his life and death. People today may think they possess authority over others. Jesus reminded Pilate that all power and authority are in the hands of God.

Pilate reluctantly orders Jesus' crucifixion (19:12, 15-16a). Pilate knew the truth about Jesus' innocence. He was convinced Jesus should be released. When he brought Jesus back to the people to release him, the Jews threatened to send a report to Caesar charging Pilate with treason.

Pilate was faced with another decision. He had to decide between Jesus and his position. It was a choice between Jesus and the world. Pilate chose the world. The Jews also had a choice to make in verse 15. They denounced God as their king and chose Caesar (the world). The choices we make have consequences. Pilate and the Jews had difficulties because of their choices to follow the world rather than the Lord.

We make decisions every day about who we will follow. May we decide as Joshua did, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

Howard is pastor, Woodville Church, Woodville.

Life and Work Willing to share



By Billie Buckley
Philippians 4

Could we paraphrase the title of our lesson to read "Willing to be used"? Our world is definitely in need of folks who willingly wear that label — USE ME!

How do we find a "use me" person? Could we buy a book that gives 100+ ways? Maybe there is a more simple way.

How do we begin? Why not with these instructions: Assemble together a willing heart that will meet others' needs with persistent prayers and sincere offers to help. Include a warm smile and at times misty eyes that are willing to share someone's life that may have gone haywire.

Paul spoke about this in our lesson in four "Use Me Views."

Use me in seizing the opportunity (v. 10). Paul thanked the Philippians for seizing the opportunity to express concern for him by sending an offering.

There are other ways to express concern. Many people we have the opportunity to be around don't need our money; they may just need us to laugh with them. Sorrow has become a way of life for them. They need the joy that only Christ can bring, the music, the laughter that only a Christian can experience even when there are no solutions or answers to offer.

Let's become "use me" people by seizing each opportunity to say, "I care."

Use me in sharing a secret (vv. 11-13). Paul had a secret that he shared with everybody. It was his secret of contentment in life. This contentment was not found in what others did for him or what he could do for himself. For him, contentment came from his dependence on Christ and his binding love.

Do you know someone in need of this secret — someone who needs binding up? We need to bind them with his love and his presence, especially those who are lonely and live life in a minor key. Maybe the loneliness is from a divorce or a silent home. Maybe it's from an empty mailbox or a muted telephone. They most surely need to know the secret of a binding cord of praise and appreciation.

Use me in an investment (vv. 14-20). Paul noted some benefits both he and the Philippians enjoyed because of their investment in him during his times of need.

Their investment in his personal needs being met led to a closer relationship in sharing the gospel; God was glorified; continual blessings were promised.

I wonder today if we need to make an investment, too. Surely, there are those around us who are searching for the missing pieces of their lives to put it all back together again. Our role is not to hide these pieces but with kindness and gentleness, to get involved in the solutions with others. That's one more fine investment to make.

Use me in a partnership (vv. 21-23). What greater partnership can we be part of than this partnership of joy? Paul concluded his letter with an all-inclusive greeting and a prayer of blessing that reflected this partnership.

In the study *Experiencing God*, we are reminded again and again of the fact that God is working and that he wants us to join him in his work. That makes a partnership, as I understand it.

The result of our relationship with God is a mind and heart like Paul's who was willing to share and be used.

Buckley is a member of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal.

**I know
HE IS ABLE**

2 Timothy 1:12

capsules

SBC TO BE CHALLENGED TO ADOPT RACISM REPENTANCE STATEMENT: WASHINGTON (BP) — A document calling for the Southern Baptist Convention to repent of its involvement in racism will be presented at the June 13 Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions session in Orlando, Fla., with the hope it will be approved by the SBC in 1995, the 150th anniversary of the convention. Called the "Declaration of Repentance," the document is the result of a meeting of 15 directors of missions and ministers from large urban areas in Atlanta last October. The attendees appointed a Race Reconciliation Taskforce that drafted the document. The declaration states, "Therefore, we ask for the forgiveness of our brothers and sisters of African descent.... We believe racism negates the liberating and reconciling work of Christ. It is therefore our fervent hope that by acknowledging and repenting of the sins of the past we will be freed to live in justice and peace in the present."

ACCIDENT KILLS FIVE STUDENTS OF SOUTHWEST BAPTIST UNIVERSITY: BOLIVAR, Mo. (ABP) — Five Southwest Baptist University students died from injuries received May 8 in a traffic accident near Bolivar, Mo. The five were returning from a weekend trip to Kansas City when their 1984 Oldsmobile crossed the center line on a hill and collided head-on with a pickup truck. The accident occurred at about 7:30 p.m. on Missouri Hwy. 13 six miles north of Bolivar, the small southwestern Missouri town where the campus of the 2,000-student college is located. A state trooper told Associated Press the driver, Kent Graham, may have fallen asleep at the wheel or been distracted. Graham, 23, and his sister, Stacy Graham, 20, were returning from a weekend at their parents' home in the Kansas City suburb of Raytown, Mo., with three friends. Also killed were Michelle Huffman, 20, of Raytown; Beverlee Cohee, 18, of Lawton, Okla., and Scott Cook, 20, of Decatur, Ill.

STREET CHILDREN ARE UNTAPPED MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY: RECIFE, Brazil (World Vision magazine) — There are 7 to 12 million street children in Brazil. According to the Brazilian government, 500,000 girls younger than 19 work as prostitutes, some as young as 11. More than 1,000 homeless girls, aged 6-20 live on the streets in Recife, coastal capital of Pernambuco state in northeast Brazil. The Casa de Passagem, begun in 1989 by World Vision, has provided 250 street girls with food, counseling, health care, and job training. In 1988 the Brazilian Congress rewrote the Brazilian constitution's description of children's rights, but little has changed since then. Mainly, "the government counts the dead and records it," said one social worker. July 23 has been set aside as "Children's Day," to remind us of the 30 million street children in the world.

HMB COLLECTING STORIES, PHOTOS OF FORMER STUDENT MISSIONARIES: ATLANTA (BP) — If you have served as a student missionary with the Home Mission Board, a researcher of that program's history would like to hear from you. Scott Hudgins is collecting stories, photos, and statistics about student home missions, which began in 1944, for a 50-year review to be presented at a student missions festival in December. During its first year, the board assigned 71 students to home mission projects, Hudgins said. Three years later, more than 300 students were assigned, and in 1954, about 700 were assigned, he said. Last year, the board assigned 1,429 college students to summer missions work, said Van Simmons, HMB associate director of student missions. Another 223 college students were assigned during the school year as semester missionaries, he said. Former student missionaries can contact Hudgins through the Home Mission Board's volunteers in missions department, in care of Student Missions History Project; 1350 Spring St. NW; Atlanta, GA 30367.

CONVENTION WILL OFFER PRAYERS FOR PRESIDENT CLINTON, OTHERS: ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — For 20 minutes on the opening day of the annual Southern Baptist Convention, thousands of Southern Baptists will pray for President Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, members of the U.S. Congress, and U.S. Supreme Court justices. The mass prayer rally, scheduled for 7:20 to 7:40 p.m. on June 14, in the Orange County Convention/Civic Center, will be sponsored by two SBC agencies, the Christian Life Commission and Brotherhood Commission. The basis for the prayer meeting is Romans 13, which urges Christians to pray for their government leaders. During the prayer time, messengers and guests will be asked to form prayer groups of no more than 10 people to pray for leaders by name. They also will pray for Southern Baptist denominational leaders, pastors, and churches as well as specific needs, such as those of the homeless, the hungry, the unborn, the elderly, and the sick. Wherever they are at that time, other Southern Baptists not attending the convention are being asked to join in the prayer time.

BAYLOR REGENTS VOTE TO EXPAND TRUETT SEMINARY: DALLAS (BP) — Baylor University's board of regents voted overwhelmingly May 20 to increase enrollment and add satellite centers for its new George W. Truett Theological Seminary, which begins classes in August in Waco's First Church. The regents voted to increase the enrollment cap at Truett from 150 to 300 students in Waco and to explore setting up satellite campuses this year at Baptist churches in the Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston metropolitan areas, all with 50-student enrollment minimums and 300-student ceilings.

Zhirinovsky issues anti-religion threat in a disturbing interview

By Dan Wooding

Russian right-winger Vladimir Zhirinovsky would stop all western religious organizations from operating in Russia if he were elected leader of Russia.

That was what the 47-year-old ultra-nationalist rabble-rouser told Hannu Haukka of International Russian Radio/TV during an extraordinary interview that will be screened across Russia and will send chills down the spines of western Christians working in the Russian Republic.

"We will stop all western Christians, eastern religions, (and) the Muslims," he told Haukka, a Finnish-born Canadian broadcast-

er during a brief visit to the Finnish capital. "We don't need religious cosmopolitanism. We will in every way limit all religious activity that is foreign to us."

In a rambling conversation the man whose party stunned the world last December by winning almost a quarter of the party vote in Russia's parliamentary elections, garnering more than 60 seats in the 450-seat lower house or Duma, outlined that the Russia he wanted would be a land of Orthodoxy, free from Western religious influences. He recently showed his devotion to the Russian Orthodox

Church where he was baptized.

"In school and at college, there was naturally no religious education. I took two courses in Scientific Atheism. That, of course, disrupted the development of faith in me. But, inside, I always held onto my convictions. I, myself, am an Orthodox, baptized. I think more than anything Orthodox... Christianity, orthodoxy, is inside Christianity."

When Haukka challenged him as saying something that sounded "threatening to the Protestant churches of Russia," Zhirinovsky responded, "To whom? No, I am not against Christian churches. I mean mainly eastern religions and the Muslims. Let's say Baptists, Adventists, Lutherans, and Pentecostals... Let them coexist. The only thing I am against is pressuring the Orthodox Church and their priests."

Zhirinovsky also voiced his distaste for Jews: "They, the Jews, are misbehaving in Russia," he claimed. "They are trying to destroy Russia. They are aggressive, cruel, and hate everything that is Russian. By the way, my grandmother was a Baptist. Her name is in the church registry in the Baptist Church in Alma Ata. She would bring me to church. So I am all for Christian confessions (denominations)."

Haukka then stated that America was "a Christian nation." He wanted to know what kind of relations he would seek with the United States of America.

Vladimir Zhirinovsky said he wanted normal relations that were peaceful and equal. "But," he went on to say, "we are against America pretending to lord it over all, in areas that have traditionally been ours — Eastern Europe... the Southern nations bordering Russia: Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey."

Wooding is a British journalist living in Southern California. He is founder and director of ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Time)

Devotional

The Fourth Bell

By John H. Hanbery

Living on a farm in the 1950s was a great experience. When a boy got old enough — about 10 or 12 — he got to plow the mules. My day finally came. I hitched up Grey and Shine. Grey went on the left and Shine on the right.

My grandfather bought a big bell and placed it in the back yard for communicative purposes. My grandmother rang the bell the first time — just after daylight — and we began to plow.

The second bell meant to pull the mules to the turn-row for a drink of water and dinner (lunch). The third bell meant to plow some more.

Just a little before dark I noticed the other mule drivers turning toward home but I thought that I could plow two more rows before quitting time. Then came the fourth bell.

Two quiet, lazy mules changed their attitudes. Ears went up, nostrils flared out, and away we went in a big circle in the cotton field plowing up cotton and weeds. We easily overtook the other mule teams on the gravel road, forcing a few in the ditch as we plowed gravel, since I couldn't turn loose of the ropes to raise the plows.

Thank goodness, we traded the gravel road for a dirt one, taking a right angle turn. As we approached the old wooden bridge, my grandfather "bumped" a few more oats in the feeding trough. My mules turned on the afterburners. Some said I resembled the coon tail on Jimmy Lee's 1954 Ford going 50 miles an hour on highway 82.

Once the mules approached the barn they slowed to a mere gallop and I was able to once again place my feet on the ground. My shoes had to be discarded due to the intense heat caused by my trying to brake. As the mules placed their heads in the trough to feed, I fell to the ground exhausted. Others had to put the mules away.

At an early age on the farm I learned a valuable lesson. Mules can count to four.

As we accept the Lord's will for our lives we will go forth and do his will as did Isaiah in Isaiah 6:8. We will work a while, rest a while, and join him in heaven when he calls us home.

Hear the bell — the call — when it rings for you. Hear the Lord when he calls, "Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live...." (Isa. 55:3).

Hanbery is music professor, Mississippi College.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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GTJ SGTE UL ZNKS ZNGZ YRKKV OT ZNK JAYZ
UL ZNK KGXZN YNGRR GCGQK, YUSK ZU KBKX-
RGYZOTM ROLK, GTJ YUSK ZU YNGSK GTJ KBKX-
RGYZOTM IUTZKSVZ.

JGTOKR ZCKRBK: ZCU.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Isaiah Twelve: Two.

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